

Attorney Docket No. 740756-2681
Application No. 10/728,987
Page 8

REMARKS

By way of the present Amendment, claims 2, 4, 6 and 8 are amended, and claims 14, 19 and 21-24 are canceled. Upon entry of the forgoing amendments, claims 2-13, 15-18 and 20 shall be pending. In view of the present amendments and the remarks advanced below, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims.

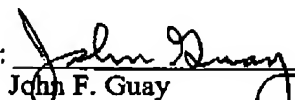
The Office Action includes a rejection of claims 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as claiming the same invention as claims 1, 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 5 and 13, respectively, of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,660,342. In response, claims 14 and 19 are canceled, thus rendering moot the rejection of these claims. Additionally, claims 2, 4, 6 and 8 have been amended to include subject matter of claims 21-24, respectively, which was indicated by the Examiner, at page 4 of the Action, as allowable. It is respectfully submitted that the present amendment obviates the rejection of claims 2, 4, 6, and 8, and is proper for entry under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 because it places the application in condition for immediate allowance.

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1-13, 15-18 and 20 have been allowed. With respect to these claims, it is noted that pages 4 to 7 of the Action includes a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter. Applicants reserve the right to provide comments in response to the Examiner's statement on or before the time the issue fee is paid, if such comments are deemed warranted.

Based on the foregoing, the present application is in condition for allowance, and prompt notification of the same is earnestly sought.

Respectfully submitted,

By:


John F. Guay
Registration No. 47,248

NIXON PEABODY LLP
401 9th Street, N.W., Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20004-2128
(202) 585-8000 – Telephone
(202) 585-8080 – FAX

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

W686453.1